

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Counsel wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the interview with Examiner Lewis on June 7, 2004. The substance of the interview is incorporated in these Remarks.

In accordance with the agreement reached at the interview, independent Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to clarify the line contact of the spacer with the adjacent balls. More particularly, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that each concave surface of at least one spacer includes a frusto-conical surface portion which, as viewed in an axial direction of the spacer, makes line contact with the adjacent ball. Claim 2 has been amended to recite that a shape of each concave surface of at least one spacer is such that, as viewed in an axial direction of the spacer, the concave surface makes substantially circular line contact with the adjacent ball.

Considering the above amendments in light of the Remarks in the Amendment dated September 8, 2003, it is apparent that the combined teachings of Agari and Grolmann would not have rendered the invention of Claims 1 and 2

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Moreover, it is apparent that the concept of linear contact as shown in Figs. 2 and 3 similarly applies to Fig. 17.

Applicants respectfully submit that, in view of the present Amendment, Claims 1 and 2 and their respective dependents are clearly in condition for allowance. Non-elected Claim 3 has been cancelled, without prejudice to Applicants' right to presentation in a divisional application.

Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

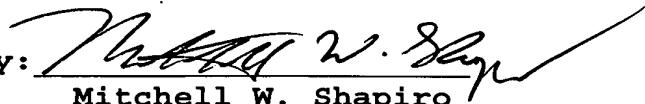
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this

paper and has not been requested separately, such extension  
is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

MWS:lmb

Miles & Stockbridge P.C.  
1751 Pinnacle Drive  
Suite 500  
McLean, Virginia 22102  
(703) 903-9000

By:   
Mitchell W. Shapiro  
Reg. No. 31,568

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